



**Request for Proposal (RFP) #25-011**

**International Student Engagement Services  
for Troy University, Troy, Alabama**

**Issue RFP: January 15, 2025**

**Proposals Due: February 5, 2025**

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## Calendar of Events

January 15, 2025	Issue RFP	
January 20, 2025	4:00 pm CDT	Deadline for requests for RFP interpretation. Email questions to <a href="mailto:lscrushy@troy.edu">lscrushy@troy.edu</a> and <a href="mailto:bids@troy.edu">bids@troy.edu</a>
February 5, 2025	2:00 pm CDT	Complete Proposals Due
February 7, 2025	4:00 pm CDT	Notification of shortlisted agencies/firms selected for presentations and price discussion (if necessary)
February 14, 2025	4:00 pm CDT	Additional information from agencies/firms (if necessary)
February 21, 2025		Anticipated Section of Proposers

**\*All dates are subject to change**

## **University Overview**

### **Troy University**

Founded in 1887, Troy University is a public institution located in Troy, Alabama, with a proud history of academic excellence and innovation. Renowned for its commitment to serving students worldwide, Troy offers a diverse range of undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs, both on-campus and online, to meet the evolving needs of a global society.

With a mission centered on preparing students to excel in their chosen fields, the university is dedicated to fostering a culture of engagement, collaboration, and lifelong learning. The Troy campus features state-of-the-art facilities, a vibrant community, and a focus on student success, contributing to its reputation as a leader in higher education. Known for its commitment to excellence, Troy University emphasizes innovation, engagement, and leadership development. The university is a hub for academic research, community partnerships, and international collaboration, equipping students to meet the challenges of a dynamic world.

Troy University is also recognized for its robust international initiatives, strong partnerships with industry and educational institutions, and its ability to adapt to the demands of the 21st century. These strengths make Troy an ideal partner in advancing innovative solutions and achieving mutual goals.

### **Troy University Office of Marketing & Communications**

The Marketing and Communications Office at Troy University serves as the central hub for advancing the university's brand, mission, and reputation. Located on the Troy campus in Troy, Alabama, this office is dedicated to developing strategic marketing initiatives, compelling storytelling, and effective communication strategies to engage a diverse audience of prospective students, alumni, faculty, staff, and partners around the globe.

With a focus on innovation and collaboration, the office oversees key functions, including public relations, digital marketing, social media management, graphic design, and brand stewardship. It plays a pivotal role in creating consistent messaging and visual identity that reflect Troy University's values of excellence, opportunity, and global reach.

Committed to enhancing visibility and fostering meaningful connections, the Marketing and Communications Office is a dynamic team of professionals poised to support impactful projects and partnerships, making it an essential partner in the execution of the Request for Proposal.

## Brand Attributes

Troy University's brand attributes are:

- International (global) – “Alabama’s International University”
  - Accessible
  - Large, far-reaching
  - Multicultural
- Friendly, with a “culture of caring”
  - Warm & Inviting
  - Individual attention / students are known by name
- Proven – “Value”
  - 137 years of traditions and excellence – Consistently ranked among the “Best” in the Nation
  - 175,000+ alumni worldwide – “Trojan Warriors One & All”
  - Accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
  - Quality academics – Sorrell College of Business achieved dual AACSB accreditation this year.
  - Winning Division I athletic programs – “One TROY”
  - 70+ years of service to military-affiliated students – TROYCOM and TROY for Troops
  - Pioneer in online learning – “Alabama’s Online Leader”
  - Preparing students for the World of Work and more
- Responsive to markets, communities and individuals
  - Lifelong
  - Supporting resources
  - Affordable
- Value-centered – “The Trojan Way”
  - Community / Service-oriented
  - Respected
- Forward-thinking – “TROY for Life”
  - Creative
  - Innovative
  - Entrepreneurial
  - Agile

## Scope of Services

Troy University seeks a strategic communications partner to design and execute a comprehensive engagement program aimed at attracting and enrolling international students, with a primary focus on India, Vietnam, South Korea, and Canada, while sharing the same strategies in the immediate service area for Troy. The ideal partner will leverage proprietary platforms and methodologies for real-time media listening, sentiment analysis, targeted advocacy, and content creation to position Troy University as a premier educational destination for students from these key regions.

## Key Objectives

- **Increase Brand Awareness:** Build visibility and positive sentiment about Troy University among international students.
- **Highlight Key Differentiators:** Emphasize unique program offerings, career pathways, scholarships, and cultural inclusivity.
- **Data-Driven Strategies:** Utilize analytics and insights to develop impactful campaigns and optimize real-time performance.
- **Leverage Leadership Messaging:** Utilize Chancellor of Troy University, as a key spokesperson to deliver messages about Alabama, the university's excellence, and the welcoming Troy community.
- **Lead Generation:** Develop and implement targeted campaigns designed to generate **high-quality leads** of prospective international students, ensuring a streamlined process for follow-up and conversion.

## Goals (Program Components)

### *Research & Analysis*

#### **Audience Exploration:**

- Outline methods for gathering demographic and psychographic data on international students, with a focus on India, Vietnam, South Korea, and Canada.
- Explain how you will validate motivations, pain points, and decision-making processes.

#### **Observational Insights:**

- Describe how media listening tools will identify real-time discussions and sentiment around U.S. universities.
- Provide examples of proprietary analytics tools capturing actionable insights.

#### **Competitive Overview:**

- Detail your approach to competitive analysis in these international markets.
- Explain how findings will shape Troy University's unique value proposition.

## ***Strategy & Positioning***

### **Value Proposition Development:**

- Craft a narrative tailored to digitally savvy, scholarship-seeking international students.
- Identify key differentiators like affordability, cultural inclusivity, and career prospects.

### **Channel Prioritization:**

- Recommend digital platforms (e.g., social media, influencer channels, education portals) and justify their selection.
- Explain how ongoing sentiment analysis will refine your approach.

### **Messaging Themes:**

- Align content with student aspirations (e.g., career advancement, financial aid).
- Adapt messaging based on research insights.

## ***Content Creation & Distribution***

### **Localized Content:**

- Create culturally relevant content tailored to each target market.
- Optimize content placement using proprietary tools.

### **Media Partnerships & Placements:**

- Identify key media outlets and channels.
- Outline your media buying and placement strategy.

### **Social Media Engagement:**

- Propose interactive campaigns (e.g., live Q&As, contests, scholarship announcements).
- Optimize campaigns in real-time.

## ***Community Building & Advocacy***

### **Ambassador Program:**

- Engage current international students and alumni as brand ambassadors.
- Highlight peer-to-peer advocacy initiatives.

### **Influencer Outreach:**

- Select influencers and education counselors to amplify Troy University's brand.
- Share examples of successful influencer campaigns.

**Referral & Advocacy Incentives:**

- Propose incentive structures for referrals.
- Describe advocacy success measurement.

***Lead Generation*****Targeted Campaigns:**

- Outline strategies for digital advertising and outreach to generate leads.
- Integrate lead capture forms, landing pages, and CRM tools.

**Follow-Up Processes:**

- Propose lead nurturing methods (e.g., email workflows, automated responses).
- Use analytics to track conversion rates and optimize follow-up.

**Measurement:**

- Share KPIs and benchmarks for evaluating lead generation effectiveness.
- Describe reporting formats and frequency.



## Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated in accordance with the following criteria:

Criterion	Description	Weight (%)
Agency Expertise & Financial Stability	Experience, financial health, and ability to handle project scale.	20%
Demonstrated Success (Case Studies)	Proven success with similar campaigns and measurable results.	20%
Personnel Qualifications	Experience and expertise of key personnel assigned to the project.	20%
Strategic Approach	Clarity, innovation, and feasibility of proposed strategies.	15%
References	Feedback from previous clients on performance and reliability.	20%
Pricing Structure	Overall cost-effectiveness and value for investment.	5%

## **Bidder Instructions**

### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to establish a contract for an International Student Engagement Services in order to design and execute a comprehensive engagement program.

Troy University (TROY) reserves the right to withdraw this RFP at any time and for any reason. Receipt of proposal materials by the University or submission of a proposal to the University confers no rights upon the proposer nor obligates the University in any manner. Any potential bidder currently involved in a contractual dispute with the University that may lead to litigation is prohibited from bidding for additional contracts with the University.

A contract, based on this RFP, may or may not be awarded. Any contract resulting in an award from the RFP is invalid until properly approved and executed by the Chancellor or approved designee, Troy University. Any agreements shall be construed and interpreted according to the laws of the State of Alabama and should be so stated in the proposal offered to the University. Troy University reserves the right to award multiple contracts, as a result of this RFP should it be deemed in the best interest of the University to do so.

### 2. Issuing Office

This RFP is being issued by and sealed proposals are to be submitted to the following address.

**Troy University  
Mrs. April Johnson  
Purchasing and Asset Management  
100 University Park  
Troy, AL 36082**

### 3. Form of Contract

The successful bidder shall submit a proposed agreement, the scope and terms of the contract shall consist of the RFP, any amendments thereto, and the contractor's proposal in response to the RFP. In the event that an issue is addressed in one document that is not addressed in the other documents, no conflict in language shall be deemed to have occurred. However, the University reserves the right to clarify any contractual relationship in writing with the concurrence of the Contractor, and such written clarification shall govern in case of conflict with the applicable requirements stated in the RFP or the Contractor's proposal. In all other matters not affected by the written clarification, if any, the RFP shall govern.

No modifications or changes in any provision in the contract shall be made, or construed to have been made, unless such modification is mutually agreed to, in writing, by the Contractor and the University and incorporated as a written amendment to the contract. Memoranda of understanding and correspondence shall not be construed as amendments to the contract.

4. Deviations from the Form of Contract

The stated requirements appearing elsewhere in the RFP shall become a part of the terms and conditions of any resulting contract. Any deviations, therefore, must be specifically defined by the Contractor in the proposal which, if successful, shall become part of the contract, but such deviations must not be in conflict with the basic nature of this RFP.

5. Execution of Contract

The Contractor to whom the contract is awarded shall, within ten (10) days after prescribed documents are presented for signature, execute and deliver to TROY the contract in substantial form, and include those items added or deleted during negotiations. The Contractor shall also provide satisfactory evidence of all required insurance coverage, bonds, and proof satisfactory to TROY, of the authority of the person executing the contract on behalf of the Contractor.

The above documents must be furnished, executed, and delivered before the contract will be executed by TROY. The contract will not be binding upon TROY until it has been executed by TROY and a copy of such fully executed contract is deliverable to the Contractor.

**The contract shall be for an initial term of one year with successive one-year renewal options not to exceed a total of five (5) years from the initial date of commencement. The Contractor will note in the proposal that the University shall be allowed to terminate the contract without cause at the end of the current contract year with 90 days written notice to the contractor.**

6. Contract Requirements

PERFORMANCE BONDS:

Troy University policy provides that a bond is a responsible sum for faithful performance of the contract, with adequate surety, shall be required in an amount specified in the advertisement for bids. The performance bond shall be set at no less than 10% of the total contractual amount or at a stated amount of no less than the cost of one month's service, whichever is greater. A performance bond must be in effect prior to the first date of service. Upon award of the bid, the successful bidder will be responsible for providing a Performance Bond, which should be valid until all work associated with this project has been completed. The performance bond shall be presented to the Troy University Purchasing Department before a purchase order is issued. No goods are to be delivered and no work is to begin without an official Troy University purchase order.

VENDOR DISCLOSURE FORMS:

State of Alabama Act 2001-955 requires that the Vendor Disclosure statement be completed and filed with all proposals, bids, contracts or grant proposals to the State of Alabama in excess of \$5,000.00. A vendor disclosure statement is not required for contracts for gas, water, and electric services, where no competition exists, or where rates are fixed by law or ordinance. In circumstances where a contract is awarded by competitive bid, the disclosure statement shall be required only from the person receiving the contract and shall be submitted within ten (10) days of the award. A new vendor disclosure statement is required for each purchase in excess of \$5,000.00 regardless of prior purchases. A current vendor disclosure statement must be on file before invoices can be processed for payment.

#### IMMIGRATION/EVERIFY DOCUMENTATION:

Alabama Law (Section 31-13-9 (a) and (b), Code of Alabama, 1975) - The State of Alabama passed new legislation effective January 1, 2012 known as the Beason-Hammon Alabama Taxpayer and Citizen Protection Act, Act No. 2011-535. This legislation requires anyone receiving state monies to verify that they are in compliance with the new immigration law. State Agencies, including Troy University are required to withhold payment until proper verification has been obtained. Please complete the enclosed Alabama Affidavit and/or enclose a copy of the approved federal E-Verify registration. For vendors with no Alabama employees, please indicate your federal E-Verify # and indicate "NO ALABAMA EMPLOYEES."

#### 7. Examination of RFP Document

The bidder is encouraged to carefully examine all related RFP documents to become fully informed of the requirements and preferred features of the services and products to be provided. The bidder is responsible for collecting all necessary data required for developing its proposal for the described services.

Interested bidder(s) may contact Mrs. April Johnson with Troy University Purchasing & Asset Management Department, between January 15, 2025 and January 20, 2025 for any required clarifications. Any questions asked after this date may not be answered.

#### 8. RFP Deadlines and Events

Questions relating to this RFP should be submitted in writing to [lscrushy@troy.edu](mailto:lscrushy@troy.edu) and [bids@troy.edu](mailto:bids@troy.edu) by January 20, 2025 by 4:00 pm CDT.

Sealed proposals will be received until **2:00 PM CST on February 5, 2025** at which time bids will be publicly opened. Proposals received after the date and time specified **will not** be considered.

**Bidder must submit four (4) hardcopy original documents and (1) flash drive including a pdf version of the proposal.** These documents will become the property of TROY.

Sealed Proposals can be either mailed or delivered to the following address:

**Troy University  
Mrs. April Johnson  
Purchasing and Asset Management  
100 University Park  
Troy, AL 36082**

**The outside cover should be clearly marked as:**

**Proposal for International Student Engagement Services  
RFP # 25-011  
Name of Company  
February 5, 2025  
2:00 pm CDT**

Troy reserves the right to request vendor demonstrations or presentations from selected firms. These firms will be notified directly if such presentation will be required. Unless notified, no presentation will be required. All costs associated with these presentations would be the responsibility of the firm.

9. Proposal Addenda and Rule for Withdrawal

Prior to the deadline date specified for receipt of proposals, a proposal may be withdrawn by submitting a written request for its withdrawal to the address listed above.

Unless requested by the University, the University will not accept any addenda, revisions, or alterations to proposals after the proposal due date.

Any submitted proposal shall remain valid for six (6) months after the proposal due date.

10. Addenda – Changes While Proposing

No interpretation of the meaning of the contract documents as defined in the scope of services, nor correction of any apparent ambiguity, inconsistency, or error therein will be made to bidders orally. Every request for such interpretation or correction shall be addressed in writing to:

**Troy University  
Mrs. April Johnson  
[lscrushy@troy.edu](mailto:lscrushy@troy.edu) and [bids@troy.edu](mailto:bids@troy.edu)**

Any such request(s) for interpretation or correction must be received by 4:00 pm CDT on January 20, 2025 in order to be given consideration.

11. Rejection of Non-Responsive Proposals

Proposals shall be considered non-responsive if they contain omissions, alterations of unacceptable conditions or limitations, or other irregularities of any kind. TROY may reject proposals considered non-responsive.

12. Oral Commitments

Potential bidders should clearly understand that any verbal representations made or assumed to be made during any oral discussions held between representatives of potential bidders and any Troy University personnel are not binding on Troy University, unless confirmed in writing by Mrs. April Johnson.

Bidders shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity for discussion, negotiation, and clarification of proposals. Any oral clarifications of substance shall be reduced in writing by the proposer when requested by TROY.

13. Offer of Gratuities

By submission of a proposal, the proposer certifies that no official or employee of the University has or will benefit financially or materially from this contract. The contract may be terminated by the University if it is determined that gratuities of any kind were either offered to, or received by, any official or employee of the University from the potential bidder, his agent, or employees.

14. Restrictions on Communicating with University Staff

From the issuance date of the RFP, until a Contractor is selected and selection is announced, bidders are not allowed to communicate with any University staff except:

1. The Purchasing and Asset Management department
2. Leslie Scrushy, AVC for Marketing and Communication
3. University Representatives during oral presentations and demonstrations (if applicable)

**The University shall reserve the right to reject a proposal for violation of this provision.**

15. Compliance with the Law

Contractor shall comply with all applicable laws, ordinances, rules and regulations relating to the Services provided under this Agreement.

16. Insolvency

In addition to all other rights herein, either party hereto may terminate this Agreement without prior notice should the other party become insolvent, voluntarily file for bankruptcy or receivership, or make any assignment for the benefit of creditors, or should the other party have commenced against it any proceeding, suit or action in bankruptcy or receivership provided such proceeding, suit or action is not dismissed within thirty (30) days.

TROY's financial status depends directly upon appropriations from the State of Alabama. Therefore, this agreement, and its continuation, is hereby expressly made contingent upon TROY actually receiving from the State of Alabama an appropriation in sufficient amount so as to allow TROY to meet its financial obligations. Such determination shall be made solely by TROY and such determination shall be final and binding upon both parties. If at any time TROY shall determine that its appropriation is not adequate to allow it to meet its obligations, then in such event TROY shall be allowed to terminate this Agreement, upon 90 days written notice to Contractor, with all other termination and final settlement provisions remaining applicable hereto.

17. Trade Secrets and Proprietary Information

During the term of this Agreement, Contractor and University may have access to certain proprietary materials of each other. In the case of Contractor, proprietary information shall include management guidelines and procedures, faculty data, student data, staff data, operating manuals, and similar compilations regularly used in Contractor's business operations ("Trade Secrets"). Neither University nor Contractor shall disclose any of the other party's Trade Secrets or other proprietary information, directly or indirectly, during or after the term of this Agreement. The parties shall not photocopy or otherwise duplicate any such material without the prior written consent of the originator. All Trade Secrets and other proprietary information shall remain the exclusive property of its originator and shall be returned thereto immediately upon termination of this Agreement. In the event of any breach of this provision, the offended party shall be entitled to equitable relief, including an injunction or specific performance, in addition to all other remedies otherwise available. This provision shall survive termination of this Agreement.

18. Assignment

This Agreement, or any portion thereof, may not be assigned by either party without the written consent of the other.

19. Catastrophe

Neither Contractor nor TROY shall be liable for failure to perform its respective obligations hereunder when such failure is caused by fire, explosion, water, act of God, civil disorder or disturbance, strikes, vandalism, war, sabotage, weather and energy related closings,

governmental rules or regulations, failure of third parties to perform their obligations with respect to the Services, or like causes beyond the reasonable control of such party, or for real or personal property destroyed or damaged due to such causes.

It is required by the University that the successful bidder speak to their disaster recovery/backup methodology in order for the Electrical Supplier to remain operational in a disaster situation. The University requires that the vendor demonstrate routine exercise of their disaster recovery plan and provide reports to the University of those exercises on an annual basis. Failure to provide adequate disaster recovery/backup mechanisms in order to mitigate vendor downtime could result in the termination of the contract by TROY should the deficiency not be corrected. Remediation of the disaster recovery/backup facilities would be required in a mutually agreed to time frame by the bidder and University.

20. Severability

If any term or provision of this Agreement or the application hereof to any person or circumstance shall, to any extent or for any reason be invalid or unenforceable, the remainder of this Agreement and the application of such term or provision to any person or circumstance other than those as to which it is held invalid or unenforceable shall not be affected thereby, and each remaining term and provision of this Agreement shall be valid and enforceable to the fullest extent permitted by law.

21. Amendments to Agreement

All provisions of this Agreement shall remain in effect throughout the term hereof unless the parties agree, in a written document signed by both parties, to amend, add or delete any provision. This Agreement contains all agreements of the parties with respect to matters covered herein, superseding any prior agreements and may not be changed other than by an agreement in writing signed by the parties hereto.

22. Entire Agreement

This Agreement and its attachments and other documents specifically incorporated by reference herein contains the entire understanding and agreement of the parties concerning the matters contained herein, and supersedes and replaces any prior or contemporaneous oral or written contracts or communications concerning the matters contained herein.

23. Litigation

The contract shall be governed by the laws of the State of Alabama both as to its interpretation and performance without regard to its choice of law requirements. Should either party be required to legally enforce the contract then suit shall be filed in the Circuit Court of Pike



County, Alabama as the exclusive venue to adjudicate the same and the non-prevailing party shall be responsible for the expenses of the prevailing party, including reasonable attorney's fees as a result of such litigation.

## **Proposal Format**

Proposals shall be submitted in the format contained in the Request for Proposal. This material must be in sequence and related to the Request for Proposal. The University will make no reimbursement for the cost of developing or presenting proposals in response to this Request. Only information specifically related to this scope of services will be evaluated. Proposals must present the following information.

- Section A: Executive Summary:** Overview of your firm, expertise, and approach to this project.
- Section B: Detailed Approach:** Address each program component (**Research, Strategy, Content, Community, and Lead Generation**) comprehensively.
- Section C: Timeline & Deliverables:** Clear monthly milestones aligned with project phases.
- Section D: Budget Proposal:** Pricing structure, resource allocation, and projected ROI.
- Section E: Case Studies & References:** Relevant examples of previous campaigns and client references.
- Section F: Primary Point of Contact:** Key personnel responsible for managing the partnership.
- Section G: Exceptions to RFP:** The vendor must address any and all exceptions to this RFP. There are certain exceptions that will not be accepted due to legal requirements by the State of Alabama or University Policy.
- Section H: Acknowledgement of Amendment or Addendum to RFP:** Receipt by a bidder of an amendment or addendum to the RFP must be acknowledged by inserting a copy in the bidders' proposal.
- Section I: Proprietary Information:** After the award of the contract, all proposals will be opened for public inspection (State of Alabama law). Trade secrets, test data and similar proprietary information will remain confidential, provided such material is clearly marked. However, net cost information will not be considered confidential. Please complete a summarized listing of all confidential data by referencing its page number/section.

## **Final Notes**

- Proposals must be **complete, clear**, and aligned with the outlined requirements.
- Troy University reserves the right to **accept or reject any proposal**, waive irregularities, or cancel this RFP process without prior notice.

**Thank you for your interest in partnering with Troy University.**